

HOW TO CONVERT LEADS INTO SALES

Marketing Tips You Can Use Right Away!

Here are 7 suggestions for turning your sales and marketing prospects into customers.

① Use conversion rates and sales goals to track your progress

Calculate your past conversion rates to give yourself a baseline for improvement. Or if you're new to sales or direct marketing, try to get a sense for the conversion rates your colleagues are experiencing in your industry, and set some achievable goals for yourself. Having a sense of where you are now and where you can improve will help you to establish a baseline for success, and keep you motivated.

Like charting out a fitness goal, you'll want to set some initial goals to meet, and then revise them upward as you get better and better. If you head to the gym without any defined routines or goals you may find yourself drifting and not improving week after week. Don't let your sales progress fall into the same pattern.

The purpose of this is ultimately to keep you moving forward with some sense of structure defined by regular benchmarks. In order to meet your goals you'll need to contact and convert a certain number of leads per day. Steady progress is how you will generate healthy sales-revenue figures and become a master salesperson.

② Response time is important

The faster you follow up with a potential sales lead, the better chance you have of converting the prospect. Customers like to feel their business is important to your company. By responding quickly and showing a high level of interest you will have a better chance of gaining their business.

Remember you have an advantage by being the prospect's first point of contact. But simply sparking their enthusiasm often leads them to check out your competitors too. Ideally you are able to respond fast enough that this isn't an issue.

③ Keep in contact with prospects

If someone isn't purchasing from you now, that doesn't mean they won't need your product in the future. If you have access to their contact information, try and touch base quarterly, or at least send a card for their birthday or another holiday.

If you continue to stay in contact over time and remain on their radar, there's a good chance they will think of you when they do need your products or services down the road.

In your follow-up "touches" see if you can also find a way to weave relevant industry information into your mailer or email. People will appreciate the effort and sometimes reward it with a sale. And it will also keep them intrigued and curious about your subsequent mailers and emails. Become a trusted advisor in your field – people like to stay connected to and purchase from industry experts.

④ Don't just sell – help them purchase

A prospect wants to feel like a salesperson has their interests and needs in mind first and foremost. If you are focused on your commission or trying to sell them something they don't really need, more often than not they will sense this and choose to do business elsewhere. If a customer trusts you and your intentions as an ethical salesperson and a knowledgeable advisor, they will return to you again and again.

Focus more on assessing their goals and helping them articulate their needs – then help them make the correct choice. Even if you aren't able to provide the right product or service at the time, adopting this helpful attitude will generate a lot of word-of-mouth referrals for you with various friends and colleagues of your prospects.

⑤ Communicate with your marketing department

Collaborate and work with your company's marketing department to help maximize your lead system. Marketing and sales are just two sides of the same coin, so the more you communicate with each other about what is working to persuade your prospects the better. Prospects should get the most effective and relevant messaging possible from the very first ad they see, right on through to the completed purchase.

On the flip side, it's important for you to keep an eye on the marketing pieces and advertisements that are leading the prospect to you. It's like a baton hand off – aim for a smooth and seamless transition. If you know exactly what messaging worked to get the prospect interested, you'll have a foundation for continuing the conversation.

⑥ Anticipate objections and be ready with proven solutions

Potential customers will often raise objections about why they can't purchase what you're selling – sometimes the objection is the actual objection, but often it's not. The prospect may even have multiple objections rolled into one objection, which they'll cite to decline the offer. Regardless, there's usually a fairly clear reason or reasons why a customer is not sold yet. Keep asking questions and figure out what the objection is – then have proven solutions at the ready.

It's also not uncommon for customers to have preconceived or otherwise wrong notions about your offer based on other promotions they may have received from your competitors. If you're unlike the competition in key ways, you'll need time to get that across, and asking thoughtful questions about their needs can get you the time you need to show you're different. If you're new to selling your product or service, ask your colleagues about specific ways to respond to various objections. You aren't trouble-shooting computers here, but you'll be surprised how reliably a particular objection can be overcome with the right response.

For example, if a prospect is in a temporary budget-crunch, have a rock-bottom low-cost option up your sleeve, or a free trial period. Many people are simply on a tight budget at various times during the month – but in few weeks they'll call back with a bigger order. Let the prospect dip their toe in the water. The important thing is to keep the relationship moving forward.

⑦ Maximize conversions through multiple forms of contact

Experienced salespeople and marketers know that adding even just one more form of contact to their mix often increases conversion rates in dramatic and surprising ways. If you first contact a potential lead through the mail, reach out further and stay in contact with them via telephone or email, or all three.

Quite frankly, the exact reasons why “multi-channel marketing” works so well aren't perfectly understood. One theory is that you need to earn a prospect's trust to tip the scales toward choosing your company; and multi-channel marketing is the fastest route toward establishing trust and credibility. It demonstrates the scope and professionalism of your operation.

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